

# **RHODE ISLANDERS ARE READY FOR A NEW DIRECTION**

*Under the leadership of President Bush and his Republican allies in Congress, life has become more difficult for Rhode Islanders. Here are some of the ways that life has become less affordable and secure in Rhode Island. Democrats are working for real security, better jobs, college access for all, energy independence, affordable health care, and retirement security. It's time for a new direction in Rhode Island.*

## **INCOME: RHODE ISLANDERS ARE BARELY EARNING MORE TODAY THAN THEY WERE FIVE YEARS AGO**

- In 2000, the median income in Rhode Island was \$ 48,937<sup>1</sup>
- In 2005, the median income in Rhode Island was \$ 49,511, a modest increase of 1.2 percent.<sup>2</sup>

## **HEALTH CARE: THE NUMBER OF UNINSURED IN RHODE ISLAND HAS GROWN UNDER BUSH REPUBLICANS**

- In 2000, Rhode Island had 72,000 adults without insurance (7.4 percent).<sup>3</sup>
- In 2005, Rhode Island had 125,000 adults without insurance (11.8 percent).<sup>4</sup>
- Rhode Island had 27,144 children benefit from the SCHIP Program.<sup>5</sup> If funding is not restored by Congress to the SCHIP program, Rhode Island will face a funding shortfall of \$41,480,000.<sup>6</sup>

## **EDUCATION: THE COST OF COLLEGE CONTINUES TO RISE IN RHODE ISLAND**

- In 2001, tuition at a public four-year institution in Rhode Island was \$11,104.<sup>7</sup> In 2005, it was \$13,541, a 22 percent increase.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2001, tuition at a private four-year institution in Rhode Island was \$26,157.<sup>9</sup> In 2005, it was \$30,907, an 18 percent increase.<sup>10</sup>
- Number of Rhode Islanders affected by the lapse of the College Tuition Tax Deduction – 13,820<sup>11</sup>
- Number of Rhode Islanders affected by the lapse of the Educator Expenses Tax Deduction – 15,909<sup>12</sup>

## **GAS PRICES: THE HIGH COST OF GAS CONTINUES TO BE A BURDEN FOR RHODE ISLAND RESIDENTS**

- In 2001, the average cost of gas in Rhode Island was \$1.515 a gallon.<sup>13</sup>
- Today the average cost of gas in Rhode Island is \$2.506 a gallon.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2001, the average annual cost of gas for a household in Rhode Island was \$1,672.<sup>15</sup>

- Today the average annual cost of gas for a household in Rhode Island is \$2,765, \$1,093 (65.4 percent) more than it was in 2001.<sup>16</sup>

### **SOCIAL SECURITY: RHODE ISLANDERS DON'T WANT AN END TO SOCIAL SECURITY**

- Number of Social Security Beneficiaries in Rhode Island – 191,710<sup>17</sup>
- Average Monthly Benefit per Beneficiary in Rhode Island – \$887<sup>18</sup>

### **IRAQ, TROOPS AND VETERANS: RHODE ISLANDERS ON THE FRONT LINES**

- Number of Rhode Islanders killed in Iraq – 9<sup>19</sup>
- Number of Rhode Islanders wounded in Iraq – 80<sup>20</sup>
- Number of Rhode Islanders wounded in Afghanistan – 4<sup>21</sup>
- Number of Veterans in Rhode Island – 91,161<sup>22</sup>

### **REPUBLICANS CONTINUE TO PUSH FOR GIVEAWAYS FOR A WEALTHY MINORITY WHILE IGNORING RHODE ISLAND'S MINIMUM WAGE WORKERS**

- Only 101 estates in Rhode Island paid an Estate Tax in 2004.<sup>23</sup>
- Only 16 estates in Rhode Island will benefit from the Estate Tax cut in 2009.<sup>24</sup>

### **CRIME: FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY POLICING IS DISAPPEARING**

- Amount of COPS Funding Dispersed in 2002 – \$3,148,246<sup>25</sup>
- Amount of COPS Funding Dispersed in 2006 – \$789,782<sup>26</sup>

### **TAX CUTS: BUSH TAX POLICIES BENEFIT THE WEALTHIEST RHODE ISLANDERS**

**The Bush tax cuts have overwhelmingly benefited the wealthiest Rhode Islanders.**

- In 2001, the richest one percent of Rhode Island residents each received an average of \$2,533 in tax cuts, while middle class Rhode Island residents received only \$346.<sup>27</sup>
- In 2006, the richest one percent of Rhode Island residents will receive an average of \$33,787 in tax cuts, while middle class Rhode Island residents will only receive \$585.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2010, under the Bush tax plan, the richest one percent of Rhode Island residents will each receive an average of \$66,270 in tax cuts, while middle class Rhode Island residents will only receive \$735.<sup>29</sup>

**The richest Rhode Islanders receive an ever-growing share of the Bush tax cut.**

- In 2001, the richest Rhode Islanders received 6.1 percent of the Bush tax cut, while the middle class received 16.8 percent of the tax cut.<sup>30</sup>
- But, in 2006, the richest Rhode Islanders will get 25.2 percent of the Bush tax cut, while the middle class will get 8.2 percent of the tax cut.<sup>31</sup>
- And, in 2010, the richest Rhode Islanders will get 46.4 percent of the Bush tax cut, while the middle class will get 10.1 percent of the tax cut.<sup>32</sup>

### **Bush capital gains and dividend tax cuts overwhelmingly benefit the wealthiest Rhode Islanders.**

- In 2010, the richest Rhode Islanders will receive an average of \$11,732 from the Bush capital gains and dividend tax cuts. That means the richest Rhode Islanders will be getting over 45.6 percent of all of the tax cut benefit.<sup>33</sup>
- In contrast, in 2010, middle class Rhode Islanders will receive an average of \$50 from the Bush capital gains and dividend tax cuts. That's just 3.8 percent of the benefit going to the middle class.<sup>34</sup>

### **SOURCES**

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- 3: US Census Bureau, Health Insurance Coverage: 2001.  
[<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hlthins/hlthin01/hi01tb2.html>]
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- 7: National Center for Education Statistics, "Digest of Education Statistics 2001"
- 8: National Center for Education Statistics, "Digest of Education Statistics 2005"
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- 14: *Fuel Gauge Report*, 9/25/06
- 15: Figure Computed from information from Census Bureau State Fast Facts, EIA State petroleum profiles, FHWA Data, and 9/26/06 *Fuel Gauge Report*.
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26: Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, *Sum of Awards made by State*, generated 9/27/06.

27: Citizens for Tax Justice, 6/22/06. Middle class is defined as the middle 20 percent of incomes.

[\[http://www.ctj.org/pdf/gwbdata.pdf\]](http://www.ctj.org/pdf/gwbdata.pdf)

28: Citizens for Tax Justice, 6/22/06. Middle class is defined as the middle 20 percent of incomes.

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